

strain gauges. Such load cells supply an electronic output signal. The Larson device clearly does not make use of a load cell, but rather uses a mechanical pointer system to indicate the measured pressure within the ball.

Moreover, independent claim 1 of the present invention recites a plunger that is pivotable about an axis. The plunger 30 disclosed in Larson is displaced upwardly to elevate the plunger extension 46 and thereby tilt the pointer 54, as seen in FIG. 6. Neither the plunger 30 nor the plunger extension 46 is pivotable about an axis.

Further, independent claim 1 of the instant invention defines that the underside surface of the plunger cooperates with the load cell. The plunger in Larson does not directly cooperate with a load cell.

Still further, independent claim 1 of the instant invention recites a means for reducing the load cell's sensitivity to the positioning of an applied force on the upper surface. Such means for reducing the load cell's sensitivity to the positioning of an applied force is disclosed throughout the specification. For example, a shaped upper surface as shown in figures 5,6, and 10 is used to offset the misalignment of a tube on the upper surface. The device disclosed in Larson, however, does not disclose such a feature. In fact, the Larson device will always receive an applied force, the internal pressure of the inflated ball 14, aligned along the longitudinal axis of the plunger 30. Therefore, the Larson device does not include, nor in fact need, a means for reducing sensitivity caused by misalignment of the applied force.

Similarly, independent claim 22 of the instant invention recites a plunger that is rotatably coupled to the housing by means of a hinge. The plunger 30 disclosed in Larson is displaced upwardly to elevate the plunger extension 46 and thereby tilt the pointer 54 upwardly, as seen in FIG. 6. Neither the plunger 30 nor the plunger extension 46 is rotatably coupled to a housing.

Further, independent claim 22 of the instant invention recites an upper surface that is shaped to compensate for variations in measured force caused by the misalignment of the applied force. The Larson device, however, does not disclose such a component. In fact, the Larson apparatus will always receive an applied force, the internal pressure of the inflated ball 14, aligned along the longitudinal axis of the plunger 30. Therefore, the Larson device

does not include, nor in fact need, an upper surface that is shaped to compensate for variations in measured force caused by the misalignment of the applied force

Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that Larson does not teach a number of the elements of the claimed invention, either explicitly or impliedly, and, therefore, cannot anticipate claims 1-24. In light of the above, it is respectfully submitted that the rejection be withdrawn and claims 1-24 be allowed.

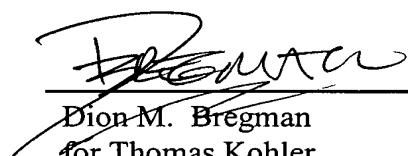
***CONCLUSION***

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that the application is now in a condition for allowance. Should the Examiner believe that a telephone interview would help advance the prosecution of this case, the Examiner is requested to contact the undersigned attorney at 650-849-7603.

If there are any fees or credits due in connection with the filing of this Amendment, including any fees required for an Extension of Time under 37 C.F.R. Section 1.136, authorization is given to charge any necessary fees to our Deposit Account No. 16-1150 (order no. 008236-0043-999). A copy of this sheet is enclosed for such purpose.

Respectfully submitted,

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